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## VARIOUS.

## Japanese Metal Work.

The Japanese are very skillful in all that relates to the artistic treatment of the metals, and produce works in this branch of art as commendable as they are varied. They are expert in casting, carving, damascening, engraving, inlaying, weaving, and tempering; and in many of these departments produce specimens comparable to anything done in Europe. Perhaps the most characteristic of all their metallurgic works is that called by them *syakfido*. In this, numerous metals and alloys are associated, the designs being produced in colors through the agency of differently colored metals—white being represented by silver, yellow by gold, black by platina, all shades of dull red by copper and its alloys, brown by bronze, and blue by steel. Gold, silver, and polished steel, of course, represent themselves in designs as well as abstract colors. A red garment, embroidered with gold and clasped with silver, would be executed in red colored copper, inlaid with gold, and furnished with a silver brooch; the sword in the hand of a warrior would be in polished steel; and if bloody, would have red copper inlaid on it. These instances will suffice to illustrate the general mode of producing colored designs by the exclusive use of metals. The Japanese have brought bronze casting to great perfection, as is proved by the superb incense burner which was presented to H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh by the Mikado, now on exhibition in the South Kensington Museum. They also produce a highly finished and polished bronze work, on which the relief ornamentation is produced by cutting the surrounding metal away. The relieved objects are then engraved, and richly damascened with gold and silver. Bell founding is carried on to a considerable extent, and art is never neglected in the designs. *Repoussé* work is well known to the Japanese metallurgists, but is not so largely adopted by them as it is by western artists. Flat silver wire, woven into diaper patterns, is a favorite material for covering uniform surfaces, and is frequently applied by the Japanese artists in an effective manner. In drawing the attention of the meeting to a group of storks, executed in gold, silver, bronze, and other metals, Mr. Audsley, in a paper recently read by him in England before the Architectural Association, said the audience would agree with him that the Japanese have been more successful than our silversmiths in appreciating the nature of their materials, and realizing the correct modes of working them. This group—where every feather is a thin plate of metal, carefully engraved; where the legs, tails, necks and heads of the birds are in their natural colors; where the rock they stand upon is modelled with accuracy, and its stunted vegetation truthfully rendered—would bear comparison with the best efforts of our silversmiths as displayed in presentation plate, of which the best that can be said is that it contains many pounds of "solid silver;" and the comparison would lead to the award being given in favor of the Japanese work. (*Scientific American*.)

## Terra-Cotta Works at Watcombe.

Having passed through the biscuit-oven the object is ready for the beautifully delicate colour which appears upon some of the ware, a result of the application, by hand, of glazes and enamel. Some small figures, such as butterflies, are printed from copper-plates on thin paper, and applied in the ordinary way to the object to be ornamented; which, being subjected to heat, the paper is destroyed, and the colour and markings remain. Then, when the ornamentation is completed, the articles are again placed in the oven, with a heat sufficient to fix the glazes, and this perfects the series of operations necessary to the formation and embellishment of a Watcombe vase. Success so signal having been obtained in the minor and utilitarian objects, attention is now chiefly directed to ornamental composition and detail; and, in respect to flower and foliage reproductions, nothing that has ever been produced is at all comparable with the really marvellous productions of Watcombe in this department. The chefsd'œuvre of the manu-

facture, as yet, have been baskets of flowers, and they claim this distinction as setting forth the infinite finesse with which the clay may be worked; results far surpassing anything, either ancient or modern, that has been attempted in this way. Each leaf is separately modelled, and consigned to its place with an exactitude of form and precision of surface strictly in imitation of nature in its minutest detail; and thus, with most perfect success, are modelled baskets of roses, passion-flowers, lilies, ferns, and indeed a variety embracing the entire circle of the picturesque Flora. Other remarkable works are statuettes of the Princess Louise, the Marquis of Lorne, the late Charles Dickens, etc., of which great numbers have been sold; and, conspicuously, a pair of vases, covered with jet glaze, and enriched with copies in gold of valuable sculptural works. We may also mention among the best reproduction of this establishment a bust of our Saviour by an eminent Belgian sculptor. *Art Journal*.

## Soft Felted Fabrics of Paper.

Amongst the novelties of the International Exhibition at South Kensington, not the least remarkable are the new patent felted papers of Messrs. Pavy, Pretto & Co. All the windows and doors of the Exhibition are fitted up with curtains of this new material, into which a certain quantity of animal fibre has been felted, and which is said to give a remarkable toughness to the fabric, without any very great addition to the cost. Curtains, blinds, and bed-furniture, of various patterns, are produced at very low prices; and it is fully expected that the new material will replace leather in the covering of chairs, bindings of books, etc. The feature to which special attention is drawn is its superiority over cotton and woollen materials for the curtains of sick rooms. It is non absorbent, easily brushed, and not likely to retain contagion.

Paper seems destined to vex the tailors and linen drapers, unless they take to it kindly themselves, and share the profits with the stationers. A paper suit of clothes for 2 s. is the latest novelty, and it hales from New-York. The tailors have not introduced it; but the drapers are selling the articles, which are of Japanese make. These paper dresses are said to be as tough as leather, and as pliant as linen. Rain will not reduce them to pulp; perhaps they will even wash. *The Builder*.

## New Photographic Method.

M. Fargier, who the editor of the *Moniteur* tells us, was the first to render carbon printing practicable, is again in the field with a new carbon process. Some specimens were exhibited, and the following details communicated, at the last meeting of the French Photographic Society. The method seems to possess considerable novelty and interest. It is as follows:

A certain saline solution, the nature of which is for the present a secret, is prepared and put into a dish. Upon this bath a common sheet of paper is floated, then dried and exposed to light under a negative. The image comes out by degrees, and you can watch its progress. When sufficiently printed, this image is laid upon a bath of blackened gelatin, like that which is used for the preparation of pigment papers. The pigment only attaches itself to those parts which have been acted on by light. The paper is then washed in warm water, and the print is finished.

## The Vendome Column.

Everything is now ready for the reconstruction of the column in the place Vendôme, at Paris. The plans are all prepared, the expenses being calculated at 250,000 fcs., and M. Normand, the architect, is only waiting for orders to commence operations. The fragments of the pillar are arranged in one of the rooms in the right wing of the Palace of Industry.